E-DATING 101

HOPING TO MEET YOUR MATCH ONLINE?
IT'S NOT ROCKET SCIENCE — IT'S DATING SCIENCE PAGES 4 & 5

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Who killed Jonathan Zak? Police offer $25K reward

Jean Zak, alongside London police Chief Brad Duncan, holds a portrait of her son, Jonathan Zak, who was shot and killed in northeast London last May. Police are offering a reward for information. JOHN MATISZ/METRO

Shot last year. The murder is 'absolutely a solvable case,' police chief says

JOHN MATISZ
john.matisz@metronews.ca

London police are hoping a $25,000 reward for information about the murder of a London man will lead them to the killer.

Jonathan Zak, 29, was shot and killed last May 31. His body was found at 7 a.m., near a footpath running through Northeast Park.

Police believe there are people in the nearby community who have important information about the case, but they are not coming forward.

"At the heart of our message is an appeal for assistance," Chief Brad Duncan said at a news conference at police headquarters on Tuesday.

The reward is being offered in exchange for information leading to the arrest and conviction of the person or persons behind the murder.

Det. Amanda Pfeffer, the lead investigator, says Zak was in the "wrong place at the wrong time," as he was simply walking home after a night of playing video games with friends when the shooting took place at about 1 a.m. Six hours later, police were told about the body in a 911 call.

"I believe that some of the people who the officers spoke with at 1:30 that morning could have provided direction to the officers in finding Jonathan's body, and also provided information on who was responsible for the murder," Pfeffer said.

Police have interviewed dozens of people, and Duncan believes it is "absolutely a solvable case."

Jean Zak, Jonathan's mother, was at the news conference. She held a portrait of her son as Pfeffer read a heartfelt statement on behalf of the family.

"For those who didn't know him: You missed out on meeting and having a relationship with a person who would listen, mediate, counsel and support you in all your decisions," Pfeffer read.

In the statement, Jean Zak reflected on her son, whom she called a "unique thinker" and "free spirit" who loved video games, camping and the company of his friends and family.

Jean Zak also expressed why it's crucial to find whoever is responsible for the murder. "Both (Jonathan's) family and friends need closure now," she said.

Appeal to the public

Do you know something about Jonathan Zak's murder? If so, contact:

- **Det. Amanda Pfeffer:** 519-630-0539
- **Det.-Sgt. Paul Waight:** 519-200-0729
- **General email:** major-crime@police.london.ca.

Mad about Marrakech

Go ahead and rock the casbah in this ancient Moroccan hub PAGE 12

Bubble rap

Western University's new student council hopes to end the school's isolationism and reach out to the city at large PAGE 2

Heat of the Knights

After a rough start to the new year, the London Knights are looking to get their mojo workin' again PAGE 15

Gone bad — and that's good

Emmy Rossum ditches her nice-girl act to play a deadly femme fatale in the movie Beautiful Creatures PAGE 9

NEWS 1

Western bubble, begone

Changes to council. New format for Western student government aims to strengthen voice off campus

ANGELA MULLINS
angela.mullins@metronews.ca

There's an effort afoot to pop, once and for all, the so-called "Western bubble."

As university students choose a new student council president this week, they'll also be electing two vice-presidents. One of those people will be charged with building off-campus relationships, specifically those with municipal and provincial government leaders.

It's the first time the University Students' Council (USC) has had someone solely dedicated to reaching into the London community at large.

Current USC president Adam Fearnall, who helped lead a campaign for the change last fall, considers the move a chance to "bridge gaps" and make Western's student leaders part of the conversation about a variety of issues.

"The utopia is a place where we can sort of look at the city, and say we're just one big group of citizens," he said.

Contribution

"We have to do our part to add to the discussion."

Adam Fearnall, president, University Students' Council, Western University

"Students are ready to do their part as being citizens instead of just getting the benefits of being a citizen."

So far, the idea seems to be working.

Because students will be electing a team of three people — a president and the two vice-presidents instead of just a president — a whole host of new conversations were sparked during this year's campaign, Fearnall said.

They included ways students could work with the London Transit Commission to help improve bus routes, ways to make the city a bigger part of orientation week and launching a good-neighbour program, designed to build a rapport between near-campus property owners and students who live in rentals.

"A lot of these issues are not ones that presidential candidates thought they had the authority to speak on in the past," Fearnall said. "What this has done is allow everyone to start talking about the same issues."

It's a conversation city leaders like Coun. Nancy Branscombe, who sits on the town and gown committee, are open to having.

Western has, over several years, been getting more involved in city affairs, something Branscombe considers a good way to, among other things, help students develop roots in London.

"I think that anything the students can do to get more involved in the community at large helps them have a better understanding of what neighbours are concerned about," said Branscombe, whose ward includes the university.

Ontario Works. Move from Market Tower OK'd

Closing the welfare office at Richmond and Dundas streets sailed through city council Monday.

Under the plan, which received unanimous support, the office will be replaced with five scattered across the city: one in the northeast, one in the northwest, one in the southeast, one in the southwest and a central site east of the downtown core.

The offices — expected to cost between $9.5 and $10.5 million with up to $2 million covered by provincial money — will mean better and more convenient service for Ontario Works recipients, officials say.

Openings will be staggered through the end of 2016 with a site in the northeast expected to be finalized this year.

The city's sole welfare office is in the core, but only eight per cent of Ontario Works clients live there, according to a report from city administrators. Homes for the remaining 92 per cent of recipients are split almost equally among the other areas picked for new offices.

"We are very much behind in the way we distribute these services across the city," Coun. Judy Bryant said Monday. "It's not about one quarter of the city at all." ANGELA MULLINS/METRO

In other council news

Coun. Paul Hubert has released the results of his second annual survey gauging how people feel about the 2013 city budget.

- About 1,500 people responded, with 66 per cent saying they don't support moving toward a tax freeze. Nearly 30 per cent say they're uncomfortable with a tax hike of more than two per cent.
- The survey, carried out by the Centre for Organizational Effectiveness, also asked people to rank the importance of six proposed economic-development projects. Prepping land for development received the most support and repurposing the Normal School in Wortley Village received the least.

At Yankee Tavern, they drink to conspiracies

Maurice Dean Wint, portraying Palmer, and Hannah Anderson, as Janet, perform a scene from The Grand Theatre's Yankee Tavern. The thriller, directed by London native Stuart Hughes, opens Friday and continues through March 2. The show weaves a tale centred on conspiracy theories and also stars actor Nicholas Campbell, known for his roles on Da Vinci's Inquest and Republic of Doyle. Visit grandtheatre.com for ticket and show information. ANGELA MULLINS/METRO

$6.4M in savings

37 people laid off at St. Joseph's hospital

St. Joseph's Health Care is eliminating 59 positions in order to balance its books.

Hospital officials say they needed to come up with $6.4 million in savings in order to reach its target for the 2013-14 fiscal year. Twenty-two positions were eliminated through early retirements, vacancies, and other mitigation strategies, while 37 workers were given a five-month layoff notice Tuesday.

The hospital said 11 new positions are being created as a result of changes to some models of care delivery. AM980/AM980.CA

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Anatomy of the back-of-van speaker sale

A Metro reporter, left, examines a speaker system being shown to her by a man selling them from a van in downtown Toronto on Monday. METRO

Bargain sound system rings hollow. Parking lot deal a real steal — for the sellers

JESSICA SMITH
Metro in Toronto

Inside Muhammed Zakir's rölkolsen "subwoofer" is a large hunk of dense rubbery material that serves no purpose other than to give the speaker weight — weight that's otherwise lacking because some of the technology you would expect to find in a surround-sound system is missing.

The particleboard and plastic speakers have a manufacturer's suggested retail price of $2,799, which both the price tag and website where they are listed confirm.

The owner of Toronto's Moog Audio pegs the rölkolsen R-10's value at $20 to $30.

"These are speakers you would traditionally find in an alarm clock," said Francis Delage, while looking over the system that Zakir brought to his store on Monday. After a closer look, he said he'd seen alarm clocks and PA systems that were higher quality.

Delage doesn't sell rölkolsen, has never heard of the brand and believes they're not available in stores.

Zakir bought his speakers from "some guys" in a Walmart parking lot in Vaughan for $100, in what appears to be what some call the classic white van speaker scam.

It works pretty much the same way every time. High-pressure salesmen open the back of their van with a sales pitch and a story about unloading supposedly high-end speakers for a bargain because of some unusual circumstances.

"They were saying they're delivery guys and they were delivering this for their boss and manager," Zakir said. "But the company had dispatched one extra and they want to get rid of it right now because if they take it back, it will be returned and be wasted, and they want to make some money off of this one extra."

The box containing the speakers "looked legitimate" he said.

Alongside the sky-high manufacturer's suggested retail price tag there are several official-looking decals on the box. One says, "Quality tested by the Council of Electronic Engineers" — a group that has little to no reputation, or does not even exist. Another is the Alfa Romeo logo with the words "Audio Master" where "Alfa Romeo" would normally be.

It didn't take Zakir long to realize his mistake when he got home and looked closely at the speakers. So he looked up the brand name on the Internet.

"I Google it and I knew — Oh my god," he said.

There are warnings online from people across Canada and in other countries about rölkolsen and white van speaker scams.

Zakir took his speakers to Moog Audio on Queen Street West to find out exactly what was wrong with them.

Delage tested the system and looked inside. The "subwoofer" isn't actually a subwoofer because there is no crossover network to separate out the bass, so the sub plays all frequencies, Delage said.

The other four speakers appear to have a small tweeter for high frequencies, but when Delage pulled off the cover he revealed only a cone-shaped piece of hard plastic.

The "home theatre" also did not come with an amplifier to drive the speakers, and Delage noted that one would have to be purchased.

Instead of buying an amplifier, an obviously disappointed Zakir opted to go home and leave the surround-sound system behind.

Quoted

"They were saying they're delivery guys and they were delivering this for their boss and manager. But the company had dispatched one extra and they want to get rid of it right now because if they take it back, it will be returned and be wasted, and they want to make some money off of this one extra."
Muhammed Zakir

Ex-L.A. cop on run believed to have died in cabin fire

The man believed to be fugitive ex-cop Christopher Dorner never came out of a California mountain cabin, and a single shot was heard inside before the cabin was engulfed in flames, a law enforcement official told The Associated Press.

The law enforcement official requested anonymity because of the ongoing investigation.

A fourth person — a deputy — died earlier in the latest confrontation with America's most-wanted man, which seemed to be coming to an end.

Officials were waiting for the fire to burn out before approaching the ruins to search for a body.

"We have reason to believe that it is him," San Bernardino County sheriff's spokeswoman Cynthia Bachman said.

The cabin was on fire and smoke was coming from the structure in the late afternoon after police surrounded it in the snow-covered woods of Big Bear, a resort town about 128 kilometres east of Los Angeles.

Bachman didn't say how the fire started but noted there was gunfire between the person in the cabin and law enforcement officers around the home before the blaze began.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

On the web

For the latest updates on this story, go to metronews.ca

Leave of absence

Brazeau ousted from Senate

Senators have voted to force Sen. Patrick Brazeau, who is facing criminal charges, to take a leave of absence from the upper chamber.

The Conservative motion passed Tuesday calls on Brazeau to step aside temporarily in order "to protect the dignity and reputation of the Senate and the public trust and confidence in Parliament."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

The box and photo containing the rölkolsen speakers sold to Muhammed Zakir. JESSICA SMITH/METRO

KEYS TO E-DATING SUCCESS: HOW TO SHINE ONLINE

If you do decide to find romance on the net, keep these tips in mind to create a winning dating-site profile

Relationship. Establish the type of relationship you are looking for. Are you looking for a fling, casual dating or a potential long-term relationship? After you establish a clear goal, it will be easier to find an online dating service that suits your needs.

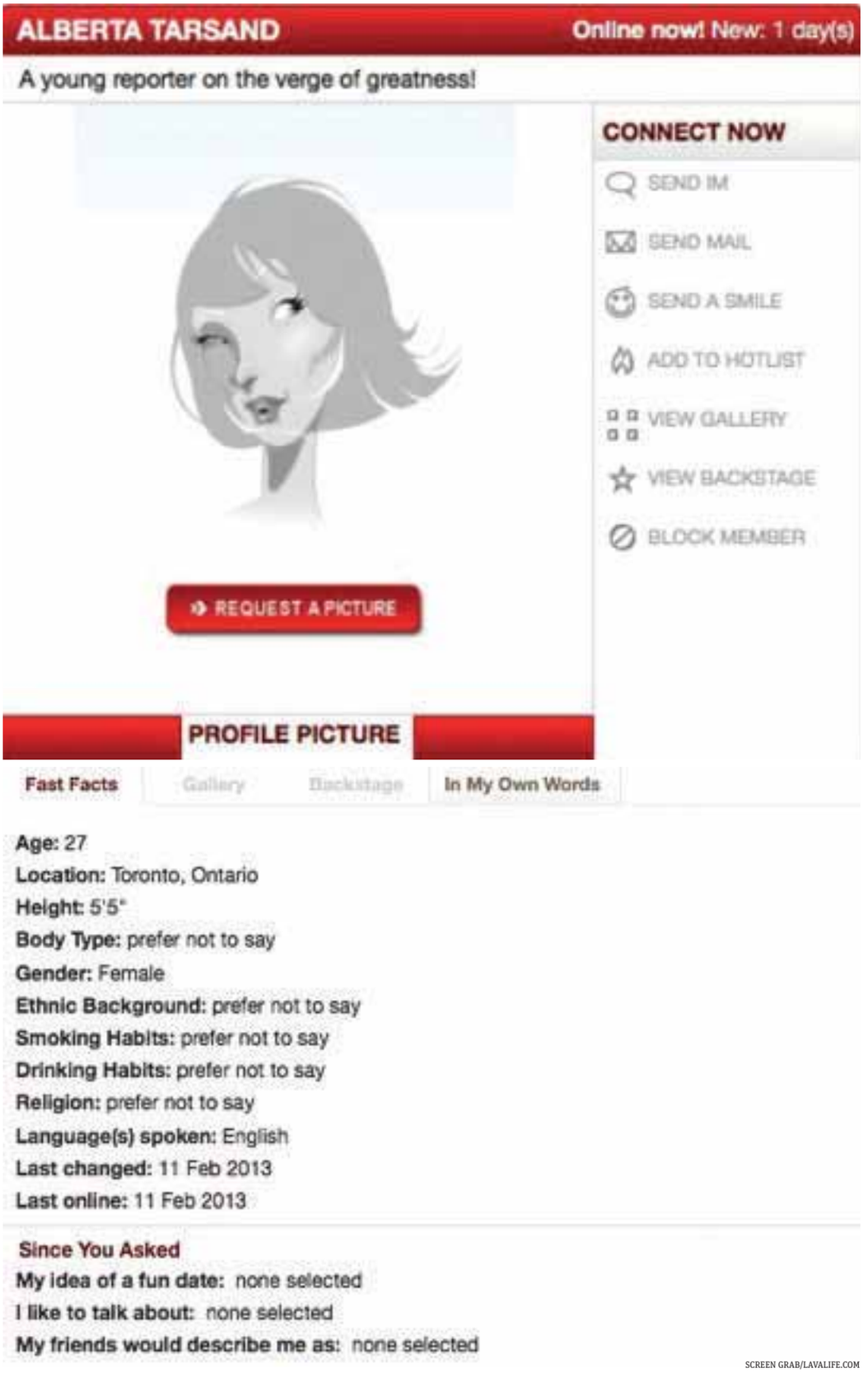
Profile name. Depending on the type of online-dating website you sign up for, your username should indicate you are serious about meeting people. Avoid names with numbers or "xx." Just your first name should suffice if you are wary about using your full name.

Profile photo. Pick a recent photo that shows your true self (not super drunk, not dressed for the clubs and no bikini shots). The most important part is to look confident and happy without trying too hard, and you will attract positive suitors.

Personal facts. Be honest in your profile, especially when it comes to age, body type, whether you smoke or drink, and if you have kids. You wouldn't want the people you meet online to lie about who they are, right?

About me. Your description should be brief, but make it stand out. Try not to sound too cliché, but do take this part of the profile to talk about who you are and why you're trying online dating. Are you too busy with work to go out to the clubs every weekend, but looking to meet someone worth your time?

Interests. Describe your idea of a perfect first date, as this will give an indication of what you like to do for fun. Describe something that sounds engaging and interactive, such as hanging out in a board-game café or playing a round of miniature golf.



LAURIE CALLSEN/METRO IN EDMONTON

SCREEN GRAB/LAVALIFE.COM

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Stephan

Both paid and free dating websites have their positives and negatives, experts say. SCREEN GRAB/OKCUPID.COM, LAVALIFE.COM, PLENTYOFFISH.COM, EHARMONY.CA

Should you pay to play the dating game?

Where to go. Paid and free sites tend to attract different types of clients with different sets of priorities, experts say

RYAN TUMILTY
Metro in Edmonton

When preparing to jump into the online dating universe, is it better to jump in with just your heart or with your wallet as well?

As online dating sites have cropped up, some have opened their doors to members free of charge, while others have monthly subscriptions for those looking for love.

Kimberly Moffit, Match.com's relationship insider, argues that paid sites are there for more committed individuals who are interested in serious relationships.

"It just distinguishes the people who are willing to put the investment in and those who aren't," said Moffit. "They are ready to make an investment in their love life."

Moffit argues that any online dating is a good thing, but people on paid sites are more likely to be taking their search seriously.

"They are more likely looking for some of the same things you are," she said.

Quoted

"(Paying for a site) just distinguishes the people who are willing to put the investment in and those who aren't." Kimberly Moffit, Match.com's relationship insider

Christine Hart, a Toronto-based dating coach, said both types of sites have advantages, but free sites tend to attract a different type of prospective dater.

"If they are going to go on the free sites, then they need to be prepared to put in a lot more time sifting through, because the free sites attract people with all levels of goals," she said.

Part of the benefit of paid dating sites is that they attract fewer people, she added.

"You can spend twice as much time sifting through profiles on the free dating sites," she said.

Julie Spira, author of the book The Perils of Cyber-Dating, said she and her clients see benefits to both types of sites.

"It is very common for someone to pick a paid site and then they will also pick a free site."

She said free sites attract huge numbers of people, which can be appealing simply for the sheer quantity of prospective partners.

"Because they are free ... they have huge critical mass," she said.

Spira said clients who pay for a dating site tend to pay more attention to the service.

"I find that a lot of them log into their paid sites more often because they are invested."

Exclusively online

For all our stories on online dating, including infographics, video and more, go to metronews.ca

Part 3 of 3

MONDAY
Is traditional dating dead?

YESTERDAY
The rise of the e-dating jungle

TODAY
E-dating success: How to shine online

Keep safe. Don't let your heart get you in trouble online: Cops

While the new online dating world is full of opportunities, it can also be full of peril.

Police have noticed that the excitement that comes with online romance can attract the wrong type of people — those who may cause physical or financial harm.

Acting Sgt. Kathy Macdonald, with the Calgary Police Service, said new relationships sometimes prevent people from seeing the bigger picture.

"When people get wrapped up in a relationship, they can't see what's going on," she said.

Macdonald said fraud artists using online dating sites can go after many potential victims in just one day.

"They will often get a hold of a lot of people at the same time."

She said scam artists often approach someone and strike up a conversation, before claiming to have run into sudden and unexplained financial difficulties.

She said if they receive money from their victims, new problems will emerge and there will be more requests for help.

Macdonald said there could also be physical dangers and she cautions people to take things slowly in the early days of a new relationship.

"Listen to your intuition and be aware of your surroundings," she advised.

Macdonald said making the first date a group meeting is a good idea, but it's essential that it be in a public place and that you tell people where you're going.

"Really, you don't know that person, you don't know who is going to show up."

RYAN TUMILTY/METRO IN EDMONTON

E-Bytes: 5 free iPhone apps for tech-savvy couples

- **Couple App.** Couple is like Facebook, but it can only be shared by two people. You can send messages, chat via Facetime, share photos and video, create moments via doodles and track important dates and tasks. There's also a "Thinking of you" button when that's all you want to say.

- **Avocado App.** Like Couple, Avocado is shared with only one special person. You can send private messages, track milestones together and share them on Twitter as a pair, and even send virtual hugs and kisses so you're never too far away from your sweetheart.

- **Tokii App.** Tokii helps you get in touch with your partner's feelings. You can send each other notes starting with "I feel" or "You're making me feel." The app aims to keep couples engaged and aware of one another's moods by providing interactive games and relationship advice, which can take your relationship to the next level.

- **Wunderlist 2.** Although not exclusively for couples, nothing is more annoying than your partner forgetting to pick up the dry-cleaning or something at the grocery store. Wunderlist 2 helps couples plan, share and keep track of tasks and even plan vacations together. It's able to sync the lists across all the devices you are using.

- **Between App.** Between is a private-messaging space that lets you and your partner create a chronological timeline tracking the special moments in your relationship. You can bookmark your favourite memories, such as photos and messages and store them in a Memory Box, as well as find date-night deals via the Event Box.

Cellphone charges

Rogers, Telus urge watchdog to scrap the wireless cap

Two of the country's largest telecom companies have some advice for Canada's telecommunications regulator as it considers imposing new rules for cellphone contracts: scrap the $50 cap.

A $50 spending limit on extra wireless data charges is one of several ideas on the table as the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunication Commission holds hearings on a proposed new wireless code.

But executives from Rogers Communications and Telus say a spending cap would be a bad idea.

"That's very disruptive to customers," Rogers' regulatory chief Ken Engelhart said Tuesday. "It's very disruptive to be cut off."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Multinationals not paying fair share: OECD

Fat cat tax. Global forum report claims lenient taxes create competitive disadvantage

The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) says large multinationals are using legal loopholes to avoid paying their fair share of taxes and that global solutions are needed to combat the problem.

The OECD report says many rules designed to protect multinational corporations from being double-taxed go too far and sometimes allow them to pay no taxes at all.

It says such rules do not properly reflect today's economic integration across borders, the value of intellectual property or new communications technologies.

The G20 countries commissioned the OECD study, which was released Tuesday ahead of a weekend meeting of finance ministers and central bankers from 20 of the world's leading economies.

The OECD says the gaps that enable multinationals to eliminate or reduce their taxation give them an unfair competitive advantage over smaller businesses.

That hurts investment, growth and employment and can leave average citizens footing a larger chunk of the tax bill, the OECD says.

"These strategies, though technically legal, erode the tax base of many countries and threaten the stability of the international tax system," OECD Secretary General Angel Gurria said Tuesday in releasing the study.

"As governments and their citizens are struggling to make ends meet, it is critical that all taxpayers — private and corporate — pay their fair amount of taxes and trust the international tax system is transparent." THE CANADIAN PRESS

Can't go? Pass it on

Ticketmaster will now allow fans to transfer tickets to friends or family digitally at no extra charge. Ticket buyers must sign into their accounts at Ticketmaster.com and email the tickets to recipients, the company said Tuesday. The technology will be incorporated into its mobile app this spring ahead of the summer concert season. PAUL SAKUMA/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE

Market Minute

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WILL BENEDICT GET TO KEEP HIS POPEMOBILE?

JUST SAYIN'
Paul Sullivan
metronews.ca

The Pope can't retire, can he?

I was under the impression that he had to stick it out to the bitter end, like poor old John Paul II, who endured two assassination attempts, Parkinson's, a number of cancer scares and a tracheotomy, finally expiring close to his 85th birthday after 25 years on the Papal Throne.

But Benedict the XVI isn't waiting for Heaven to call, announcing, in Latin no less (which adds the kind of gravity only a dead language can deliver), that he's gone at the end of the month.

Seeing as a pope hasn't resigned since 1415, no one is quite sure what to think or do. I mean, who wants to be the pope when there already is one, albeit retired, looking over your shoulder? It's hard enough being infallible; try it when there's a former incumbent with 20-20 hindsight (even more infallible) kicking around.

Big shoes to fill

Seeing as a pope hasn't resigned since 1415, no one is quite sure what to think or do. I mean, who wants to be the pope when there already is one, albeit retired, looking over your shoulder?

Along with how can you go from being infallible to inactive, Benedict's announcement prompts numerous questions.

For instance, will they set up a retirement wing at Castel Gandolfo, the Pope's summer retreat, complete with a putting green where the retired pontiff can play a little golfo?

Does he have to give back the Shoes of the Fisherman? Or does the new pope get to shop for new shoes?

How about the Keys to the Kingdom? Does he have to hand them in to the Swiss Guards at the end of his shift on Feb. 28?

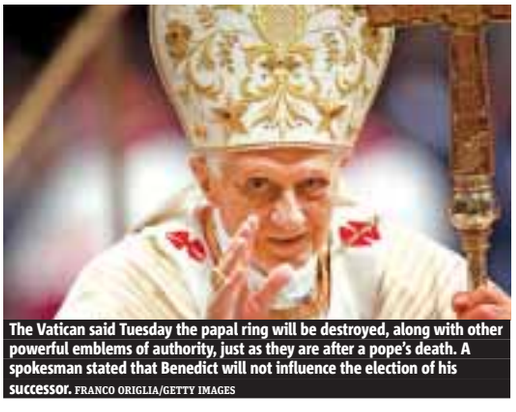
Ex-presidents get to keep their secret security details; does a retired prelate get to keep the Popemobile so he can tool around Rome in relative comfort and security?

What do we call a former pope? Your Former Holiness? Is he still holy, or is there only enough holiness for one pope at a time?

Benedict is more than a little conservative — and more than a little cranky. So the College of Cardinals is going to have to take that into account when anointing the next Pope. How can they pick a big (literally) liberal like John XXIII when Benedict is still around, quick to observe that they'd never get away with that when HE was Il Papa?

Still, Benedict's timing is almost infallible. The papacy is in real need of a refresh. Along with the usual threats from sex, drugs and rock 'n' roll, Roman Catholicism has been rocked by a series of unholy scandals, some of them involving the Vatican (the, er, butler did it). A new, progressive pope could go a long way in recapturing the spiritual high ground.

Let's hope that whoever he is, he's ready to shop for a new pair of shoes.



The Vatican said Tuesday the papal ring will be destroyed, along with other powerful emblems of authority, just as they are after a pope's death. A spokesman stated that Benedict will not influence the election of his successor. FRANCO ORIGLIA/GETTY IMAGES

Unlikely bedfellows bunk up

LENNY IGNELZI/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

San Diego Zoo

Cheetahs make dogs companions

It may sound like a doomed love story, but some dogs love big cats.

Cheetahs are the fastest mammals in the world, but they also are the world's biggest scaredy-cats — so much so that they don't breed easily and are in danger of extinction.

Some zoos are introducing "companion dogs" to serve as playmates and to provide the cats with an example.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Dinner time

"In this relationship, the dog is dominant, but we look for dogs that want to be a buddy ... Dogs worry about their cats. They protect their cats."

Janet Rose-Hinostroza, animal training supervisor at the San Diego Zoo Safari Park

Rose-Hinostroza said that because the dogs are the dominant animal in the relationship, mealtimes are always spent apart. The dogs eat kibble, and the cheetahs eat steak. "If they ate together there would be one really fat dog and a really skinny cheetah," she said.

Endangered species

Population drops over 100 years

A century ago there were 100,000 cheetahs in the wild, said Jack Grisham, vice-president of animal collections at the St. Louis Zoo. Today there are fewer than 12,000. The species has become extinct in at least 13 countries. There are about 280 captive cheetahs in zoos across the U.S.

As efforts to save the species continue, Grisham worries there is no wild to send them home to because habitat is being swallowed up by developers. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Quick like a cheetah

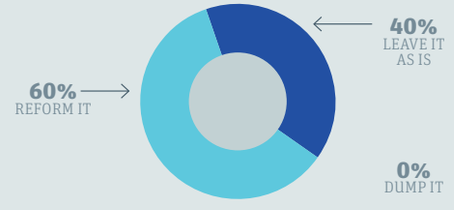
3.4

A cheetah's claws don't retract, so they have footing that takes them from zero to 96 kilometres per hour in 3.4 seconds.
Cheetahs use their tails like a rotor to balance while they are running. Their top speed is 100 kilometres an hour based on size, but they can run that fast only for 20 or 30 seconds. Extending that to a minute or more can be lethal.

Metropolitan Panel

Register at metropolitanpanel.ca and take the quick poll

What should Canada do with the Senate?



Twitter

@tanyachopp:
Would like to speed through this day to the part where I get all you can eat pancakes for dinner.

@cwatca:
Oh Fanshawe. One minute I want to curse you, then I love you, then I wanna curse you, and now I think I love you

@JasonFredin:
Just got news that any attempt to quantify a tax increase is futile. #LdnOnt

@MOWLondon:
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Meet Canadian figure skaing champion Patrick Chan on February 16 from 1 to 3pm here in Centre Court! #CommunityInvolvement #LdnOnt

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Beautiful franchise?

Finding the next cash cow

IN FOCUS
Richard Crouse
scene@metronews.ca

Film studio executives are always on the lookout for properties that can be spun into profitable movie franchises.

And for good reason.

Following an interesting set of characters over the course of multiple movies can be a cash cow. The James Bond movies have earned more than $6 billion, while Harry, Ron and Hermione have raked in almost $8 billion since their series debut in 2001.

This weekend producers are hoping to kick off the Beautiful Creatures franchise. The supernatural romance has Twilight-ish overtones, a cast that mixes new stars like Emmy Rossum with established faces like Viola Davis and Emma Thompson, and the kind of good versus evil tale that propelled Harry Potter to the upper echelons of the box office.

But not all movies catch on with audiences in the way that the super spy and wizard have.

I Am Number Four, starring Alex Pettyfer and Glee's Dianna Agron, fizzled. Rotten Tomatoes said, "familiar plot and unconvincing performances add up to one noisy, derivative and ultimately forgettable sci-fi thriller." Not really the stuff of ongoing franchises.

With sales of more than 60 million copies, the book series Lemony Snicket's A Series of Unfortunate Events seemed to have natural franchise possibilities. With 13 books in the collection there's source material galore, but even though the Jim Carrey movie did well no sequels emerged.

Emmy Rossum stars in Beautiful Creatures. CONTRIBUTED

Good girl gone bad

Emmy Rossum. Actress ditches 'nice girl' roles to play deadly siren in Beautiful Creatures

NED EHRBAR
Metro World News in Hollywood

Actress and singer Emmy Rossum is tired of playing the good girl, which is why she jumped at the chance to take on the role of deadly siren Ridley in the screen adaptation of the best-selling young adult novel Beautiful Creatures. Being bad, she insists, is just more fun.

The film's leads, Alden Ehrenriech and Alice Englert, said they initially passed on the film and had to be convinced to do it. How about you?

No, I was totally selfishly wanting to be in the movie because this is such a fun character. I read (the script) and then I read the first book and auditioned, got the part and was overjoyed. I love the character, she's so ballsy and fun and a different kind of villain than we're used to seeing.

With this and Shameless, you're playing some really interesting, juicy characters, different from the types of roles you started with.

Nice girl roles, mhmm. Playing the nice girl in Day After Tomorrow, Poseidon, Phantom of the Opera, those kinds of characters were coming more easily to me in terms of just getting the parts. I think that these characters for me were just more thrilling because I like to try to find the humanity and emotional understanding of characters that don't always do the right thing. I think that grey area is more fun to explore, it's more close to real life. What I like to do in characters is play against what you think that stereotype of that person would be.

You think about this girl (in Beautiful Creatures) who's a villain, who's happy to watch men get run over by trains walking toward her, you think of somebody who's quite malicious. But if you play it with a sense of fun and happiness, all of a sudden it becomes, "Oh, that's an interesting choice."

Congratulations on the season four renewal for Shameless.

Thank you. I'm excited to see where the character could go. The rest of this season has me working in different jobs until I seem to kind of find a steadier job as a telemarketer for a company called Universal Cup that makes disposable beverage cups. And I have a very cute, interesting boss, which can prove to be a problem.

You have a new album out, Sentimental Journey, with songs from the mid-20th century.

It's an ongoing struggle and negotiation with my own brain, trying to figure out what project gets what amount of time. But I really wanted to make this record, which is kind of why I did it with my own money and then partnered with Warners to release it, because I've always loved this kind of music. This is all the music that I grew up with, so there were obvious ones that I wanted to put on, like Frank Sinatra's Summer Wind and Apple Blossom Time, and then there were others that kind of fell into my lap.

Exclusively online

Go online to hear Jeremy Irons — who also stars in Beautiful Creatures — have a go at giving GPS directions at metronews.ca

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Don't believe the rumours, Swift isn't chasing boys

Taylor Swift knows there are people out there talking about her love life, but she's doing her best to ignore it.

"I'm sure if I looked up the latest Google alerts rumour it would say I'm chasing somebody who doesn't like me as much as I like him. People love that angle on me," Swift tells Elle magazine.

"They're like, 'Oh Taylor, coming on too strong again, chasing boys.' I never chase boys. They don't like it!" And while her recent dig at ex Harry Styles at the Grammys might suggest otherwise, Swift insists she's not one to vent her anger. "I don't think I've ever yelled at an ex-boyfriend," she says. "Ever. I'm not a yeller. I'm not a fit-thrower. If something is done, it's done."

Taylor Swift ALL PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES

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I know how the Pope feels. It's exhausting.

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BREAKING NEWS: Donald Trump takes flattering photo.

METRO DISH

OUR TAKE ON THE WORLD OF CELEBRITIES

The Word

Meet Eau de Pizza Hut

Let's cut to the chase on this item: Pizza Hut has launched a promotional perfume called Eau de Pizza Hut.

The chain is giving away 24 bottles of the stuff. To get your own, send tweets to @PizzaHut with the hashtag "LastMinuteLovers." Each package also includes a $20 Pizza Hut gift card for Big Pizza Sliders or Lovers Pizza.

"The cologne has a slightly sweet base scent of freshly rising dough, but finishes decidedly savoury with hints of Italian spice like oregano, vine-ripened tomato sauce, the crispness of fresh-sliced vegetables and all wrapped by wafts of cheesy goodness," Ashlee Firsten of Aromachology, a custom perfumery in New York said in a press release.

"It's really a quite complex combination of aromas that results in the hunger-inducing smell of a fresh Pizza Hut pizza."

It also helps if the sniffer is drunk.

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Repairs done on premises

There may have been a time when Puerto Rico was a cheap getaway but those days are long gone. Puerto Rico is heavily dependent on imported goods and fuel and that's reflected in prices from a taxi ride from the airport to the mojito at your hotel. But there are, of course, some cheap options. There are also things to do that don't cost anything at all. Here are five of them.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

5 Free things to do in Puerto Rico

ALL PHOTOS EXCEPT WHERE NOTED: THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Beaches

There are plenty of beaches here — about 300 according to some estimates. In the capital, Isla Verde Beach is good for swimming and lolling on soft sand, groomed daily. Playita del Condado is a protected cove that is ideal for young kids and a surprisingly good place to snorkel for being in the middle of San Juan. Things get much better outside the capital. Crash Boat, about an hour west of San Juan, is great for swimming and snorkelling. Farther west in the west coast town of Rincon is Maria's, which has great surf.

El Yunque

About a half-hour drive from San Juan, thanks to a relatively new toll road, is an actual tropical rainforest, the only one that is part of the U.S. forest system. El Yunque National Forest is a cool oasis on a hot day. The well-maintained trails are often shrouded in misty clouds and you can cool off in a waterfall or a river pool along the relatively easy Big Tree Trail.

ANAIVETTE64/FLICKR

El Morro

There's an entrance fee to enter the Castillo San Felipe del Morro, but the best way to enjoy this U.S. National Historic Site requires no money at all. The fort that towers over San Juan Bay, known universally as just "El Morro," is a great place to stroll, especially at sunset. The massive rolling expanse of grass at the foot of the fort has spectacular views in any direction. It's a popular place to picnic and fly a kite, sold by nearby street vendors.

Old San Juan

At the foot of El Morro is the old city, the colonial heart of San Juan. In recent years, Old San Juan has been on an upswing. Its cobblestone streets are cleaner and livelier. New stores, restaurants and coffee shops have opened and many of the old homes have been restored. It's a working city, home to the governor's office and mansion — said to be the oldest in the western hemisphere — as well as other government offices and an increasing number of professional firms. It's also become an increasingly busy cruise ship port. Outlet and luxury goods shops have proliferated in response.

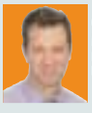
Music and Salsa

A good place to catch free live music several nights a week is the Plaza Mercado, a fruit and vegetable market in Santurce, a neighbourhood that is also home to what are considered some of the best restaurants in Puerto Rico. The lobby of the El San Juan in Isla Verde usually has live music and dancing on weekends. The bar of course isn't free but there's no charge to get in. The dancers can be intimidatingly good so the less-skilled may be content just to watch the scene. A number of restaurants and hotels also regularly advertise free salsa lessons.

CAMERA ON AUTOPILOT/FLICKR

Travel tips

Winter dreaming? Go west...



ON THE MOVE
Loren Christie
life@metronews.ca

British Columbia is heaven for winter sports enthusiasts. Here are a few ski destinations worth experiencing.

Kicking Horse Mountain Resort is situated in Golden along B.C.'s Powder Highway, a route linking together eight mountain resorts. With its four Alpine Bowls and the fourth highest vertical drop in Canada, Kicking Horse has a reputation as the place for "hard core skiers."

With no village and a handful of slope side services, this resort is indeed for people whose primary interest is hitting the slopes. However, the mountain boasts runs suited to all levels.

From your bar stool in the Eagle's Eye Restaurant at the summit, enjoy an incredible view of five of the National Parks surrounding the resort.

Cat skiing at the Island Lake Mountain Resort outside of Fernie is the epitome of backcountry luxury. Your day starts with avalanche survival training and then you are off with a packed lunch as you search for untouched alpine bowls and gorgeous glades via a Caterpillar.

A one-hour drive from Kelowna International Airport, Silver Star Mountain Resort is designed for Alpine and Nordic skiers, snow-shoers and snowmobilers to share. The My1Pass includes lift tickets and unlimited access to all Nordic trails, snowshoe trails, the Tube Town Adventure Park and ice skating at Brewer's Pond.

Falling in love with Marrakech

City of romance? Moroccan destination's beauty and old-world charm make it the perfect place for a lover's escape

AURÉLIE RESCH
life@metronews.ca

Marrakech — bustling hub of Moroccan tourism.

Not your idea of the perfect romantic destination?

The Riad Flam might change your perception.

Nestled in the very heart of the medina, Riad Flam boasts luxury and elegance behind its walls.

With only nine beautifully decorated bedrooms embracing a lovely patio with a fountain, this is the place to experience intimacy in a refined environment.

Dim lights, marble floor, four-poster bed and wooden furniture are your first step to your thousand-and-one nights romantic getaway.

The silence of the place will pleasantly surprise you as you return from shopping in the souks or markets. Slowly the mix of sounds you brought back from the Jemâa-El-Fna Plaza will dissolve in the faint murmur of the patio fountain. Any fatigue from your exploration of historic Marrakech will melt away while you unwind in your private hammam, or Turkish bath. Flam, the Riad's female owner, will perform the traditional hammam treatment that will leave you relaxed, rejuvenated and ready to taste local delicacies.

Immerse yourself in the Moroccan way of life in Marrakech. SCOTT PRESLY/FLICKR

The choice is yours: eating on the terrace under a sky bright with stars or in the oriental-style living room. Local cuisine includes lamb tajines, vegetarian couscous, Moroccan salads, cinnamon and spices, dates and oranges.

Ready to embrace the day as the sun rises? Opt for a hot air balloon adventure before dawn and admire sunrise on the desert.

Ask Abdelai at the front desk to make arrangements with Maroc Montgolfière for this amazing three-hour experience.

If living the Arabic way of life is what you are looking for, get lost in the maze of souks and make your way back to Jemâa-El-Fna Plaza for sunset. From the rooftop of Café Glacier you will enjoy an unparalleled view of the famous Plaza and the city as the amber light colours the red facades of the houses.

As the day turns into night, the call for prayer will resonate in the entire city and the Jemâa-El-Fna Plaza will come to life with snake charmers, salesmen, acrobats and jugglers.

It won't be long until you surrender to the flurry of activity.

Back to your Riad nest, gazing at the stars, you will engrave the moment in your memory forever, happy you chose enchanting Morocco for your Valentine's Day.

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It's the perfect time for date night, wouldn't you agree?

Perfect with a glass of wine and a wedge of your favourite cheese, these crackers containing Medjool dates are a great savoury treat with a hint of sweetness.

Medjool dates, which have been called the "king of dates," are semi-soft and exceptionally large. They're carried year-round by major and mid-sized grocery chains across Canada.

1. Heat oven to 160 C (325 F). Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.

2. In a food processor, pulse pistachios until finely chopped. Add 125 ml (1/2 cup) of the flour and dates. Pulse until mixture resembles fine bread crumbs. Add olives and pulse until mixed. Add remaining flour, orange zest, salt, baking powder and pepper. Pulse until well mixed.

3. In a small bowl, whisk egg and set aside 15 ml (1 tbsp) of the beaten egg for glazing. Add remaining egg and olive oil to food processor. Pulse until mixture comes together.

4. Turn dough out onto lightly floured board and knead gently. Flatten into a disc and wrap in plastic wrap. Refrigerate until firm, 1 hour.

Ingredients

- 50 ml (1/4 cup) pistachios, shelled
- 250 ml (1 cup) all-purpose flour, divided
- 125 ml (1/2 cup) Medjool dates, pitted and chopped (5 to 6 dates)
- 50 ml (1/4 cup) kalamata olives, pitted and chopped
- 5 ml (1 tsp) orange zest
- 1 ml (1/4 tsp) salt
- 0.5 ml (1/8 tsp) baking powder
- 0.5 ml (1/8 tsp) black pepper
- 1 egg
- 30 ml (2 tbsp) olive oil

Medjool Date, Nut and Olive Crackers

This recipe makes about 12 crackers. THE CANADIAN PRESS H/O

5. Using lightly floured rolling pin, roll dough 5 mm (1/4 inch) thick. Cut into 6-cm (2 1/2-inch) rounds. Place on a prepared baking sheet. Brush tops with remaining beaten egg. Bake in centre of oven until golden brown, 22 mins.

6. Let cool on a rack. Store in an airtight container up to 3 days. **THE CANADIAN PRESS/ NATURAL DELIGHTS MEDJOOL DATES**

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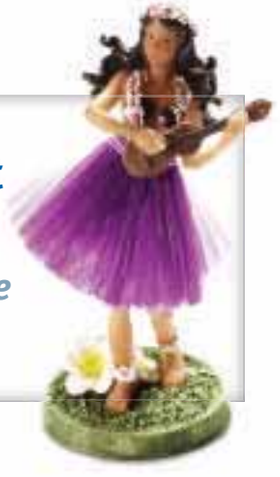

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While many Aboriginal people reside in major cities today, there are still a significant number of First Nations, Métis and Inuit students who come from small, remote communities to attend college or university.

If they hope to successfully adjust to life in a larger city and maybe one day start their career there, it's important for these students — many of whom may be the first in their family to pursue post-secondary education — to build their networks starting from day one.

Take advantage of Aboriginal service and career centres

A number of universities have specialized career centres and services for their Aboriginal students. At the University of Regina's Aboriginal Career Centre, for instance, students can benefit from educational and career planning services, partnerships with local employers and the Aboriginal community and internship programs.

The University of Alberta's Aboriginal Student Services Centre (ASSC) is another example. Students have access to a range of programs and services at the ASSC: connections to Aboriginal traditions and culture, elder services, guidance, emotional support, funding for tutoring and workshops and volunteer opportunities.

"It comes down to the networking and connections," says Shana Dion, director at the ASSC. "A lot of the connections they have might be from back home and not from the urban setting. If we don't choose to go back home, what are other options?"

Career centres are there to help students find their way into the workforce, the next stage in their lives. ISTOCK

Know you're an asset

Meeting mentors

"A lot of the connections they have might be from back home and not from the urban setting. If we don't choose to go back home, what are other options?"
Shana Dion
Director at the University of Alberta's Aboriginal Student Services Centre

Many employers want new hires who come with relevant experience. While this is true, Dion says there are those who are willing to work with students who might not have that experience.

She advises Aboriginal students who are currently making the school-to-work transition to believe in themselves and know that they are of value to organizations.

"Somebody might not come with connections to so many communities, understanding protocols, knowing who elders are, knowing who community members are in certain areas where an industry might need to connect," Dion explains. "So if a student is from a certain area and chooses to work with a certain industry leader, maybe that industry leader works with that community. You have a connection already with that community. That's an asset. You know what I mean? They don't have to build that."

It's important to acknowledge that each person comes with unique past experiences, journeys, knowledge, skills and relationships which can be a benefit to any organization, says Dion.

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World Series on Joey Bats' mind

"The sky's the limit."

Jose Bautista isn't given to mincing words or their meanings, at least not when it comes to assessing the Toronto Blue Jays and the chances for a playoff berth for the vastly retooled roster.

So when the two-time major-league home-run king lends phrases like "the sky's the limit," there's a definite weight to them, even though optimism is high in virtually every major-league city at this time of year.

"I know I've been on other teams and one that didn't have a chance (to be in the playoffs), but this is different, this is the best team I've been on in my career.... I don't see where it can go wrong for us," Bautista said Tuesday when pitchers and catchers were undergoing physicals in advance of Wednesday's first official reporting date for spring training.

Bautista's enthusiasm was buoyed by the massive off-season retooling of the Jays that brought on proven major leaguers like pitchers R.A. Dickey, Josh Johnson and Mark Buehrle, as well as infielder Jose Reyes and outfield Melky Cabrera.

"If we do what we are all capable of then it should come together for us, it will take care of itself," Bautista said. "We should be able to go to the playoffs and hopefully the World Series."

There is a stronger, business-like attitude that comes with being a part of a star-studded lineup. There is also pressure, but Bautista manages that pressure smoothly, with utter confidence that the roster, if every single player performs to capability, will at least earn a post-season berth. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

London Knights defencemen Dakota Mermis, front, and Olli Maatta skate as a pair during practice at Budweiser Gardens on Tuesday. JOHN MATISZ/METRO

Knights looking to regain swagger

OHL. London hopes to 'tidy up' act after poor start to 2013

JOHN MATISZ
john.matisz@metronews.ca

When the London Knights fell back to earth on New Year's Day, they lost a lot of swagger. Many thought the top team in the Ontario Hockey League would dust itself off, though, and leap back into space.

To date, that has not happened.

The overtime loss to the Sarnia Sting on Jan. 1 ended a 24-game winning streak spanning two months. In the 15 matches since win No. 24, the Knights have more losses than wins for a pedestrian 7-8 record.

"It's more frustration than anything," said assistant general manager Rob Simpson. "You win 24 in a row like that, and have a such good, long streak — and then all of a sudden you've lost three in a row ..."

After a weekend of hockey they'd like to have back — three 4-3 defeats to conference rivals — London is faced with the task of halting a three-game losing streak for the second time in 2013.

Simpson says the squad, which is still 11 points up on the Barrie Colts and Kitchener Rangers for the OHL regular-season crown, needs to "tidy up" in preparation for this week's action, which includes road games versus the Erie Otters and Niagara IceDogs.

Steering clear of the penalty box at key moments of the game would be a good starting point.

London pest Matt Rupert, unsuccessful in inviting Owen Sound Attack forward Cameron Brace to fight, left the club in an awkward situation Friday, as he cruised to the box early in the third period. Brace set up teammate Steven Janes for the game-winning goal on the ensuing power play.

On Sunday, Knights sniper Seth Griffith was watching from the sin bin when the eventual game-winner was potted by Kitchener forward Tobias Rieder. He was also assessed a game misconduct, joining the team's other Rupert, Ryan, in the dressing room after the latter had speared an opponent for a major penalty and misconduct of his own.

"We were coming out on the other side of one-goal games before," said Knights assistant captain Tommy Hughes. "We have some good practice time here to get back on track."

Hughes is correct. Prior to this past weekend, London was victorious in 15 of 20 contests decided by a goal, for a 75 per cent success rate. Now, they're running at a 65 per cent clip.

Update from Sunday's game

- Seth Griffith, Knights sniper who is third in the OHL scoring race, has a broken bone on his hand. He injured it while blocking a shot in Kitchener. Simpson says there's "no timetable (on Griffith's return date) yet."
- Knights forward Ryan Rupert has been suspended a minimum of three games for spearing. A full punishment from the OHL is forthcoming.

Wrestlers have Olympic fight on their hands

The international wrestling community is gearing up for a fight to keep the sport in the Olympics — launching a campaign no one knew was needed until Tuesday's surprise decision by the International Olympic Committee executive board.

"We didn't even know we were on the chopping block," said Wrestling Canada president Don Ryan.

Canada performs well in wrestling, especially since women's wrestling became an Olympic sport in 2004. Daniel Igali won gold in 2000, as did Carol Huynh in 2008, who also won bronze in 2012. Tonya Verbeek won silver in 2004 and bronze in 2008 and 2012.

The IOC executive board announced it is recommending freestyle and Greco-Roman wrestling be dropped from the Olympic program, a decision that is set to be ratified by the IOC in May.

"There was nothing that indicated that we were in trouble," Ryan said. "But we're wrestling. We're combative people. We're going to pull our sleeves up and get to work on saving our sport for 2020."

If the decision is ratified, wrestling will join seven other sports — baseball/softball, karate, roller sports, sport climbing, squash, wakeboarding and wushu — to lobby for inclusion in the 2020 games.

Huynh, who won her gold at the Beijing Olympics, expressed her shock over Twitter.

"Can't believe IOC is cutting wrestling! Huge blow to our sport all over the world. Hope that CAWA (the Canadian Amateur Wrestling Association) & FILA will lobby for reversal or we fight with other sports to get back."

JESSICA SMITH/METRO IN TORONTO, WITH FILES FROM THE CANADIAN PRESS

Grappling factors

The IOC claims its decision is based on a report that analyzes factors such as television ratings, ticket sales, anti-doping policy and global participation, as well as popularity.

Tonya Verbeek, right, wrestles at the 2012 Summer Olympics on Aug. 9 in London, England.
RYAN REMIORZ/THE CANADIAN PRESS

4 SPORTS

DRIVE 5

Findings on the new Forester

ALL PHOTOS WHEELBASE

Fuel economy

The 2.5 is estimated at 9.5 l/100 km in the city and 7.4 on the highway with the CVT, while the 2.0XT's estimate is 10.2/8.4. These values improve on the previous-generation's base and optional power trains.

2014 Subaru Forester

- **Type.** Four-door, all-wheel-drive compact wagon
- **Engine (hp).** 2.4-litre DOHC H4 (170); 2.0-litre DOHC H4, turbocharged (250)
- **Transmissions.** Six-speed manual; continuously variable with opt. paddle shifters
- **Base price (incl. destination).** $28,550

The base engine is thrifty and has enough power for most situations. The turbo option is our choice.

Design

The bolder, brawnier styling displays more curves and angles than before. The blacked-out lower body cladding featured on all models ties in nicely with the more expressive mesh-style grille, flat-black bumper and attractively shaped side air intakes featured on up-level turbo models.

Transmission

The 2.5i offers a six-speed manual transmission, or a continuously variable (CVT) option. The 2.0XT only comes with the CVT, but it comes with what Subaru calls its "engine performance management system" with Intelligent, Sport and Sport Sharp settings.

Review. Subaru's wonder wagon adds refinement plus a more satisfying right-foot workout.

MALCOLM GUNN
wheelbasemedia.com

You would think that after 15 years and three generations of Forester that Subaru would have concocted the ideal formula for its tallest tall wagon.

Actually this car-based conveyance has contained mostly all the right ingredients ever since its 1998-model-year launch and the fourth generation model arriving this spring is dishing up more of the same.

Through clockwork-regular updating, the Forester has evolved into a steady performer that treats its passengers well and totes their belongings with ease.

The Forester sits on a new platform that modestly stretches the distance between the front and rear wheels. That translates into a bit more rear legroom (up-level trims add a reclining rear seat), but a taller roofline and lower load floor adds about 10 per cent more cargo volume with the split-folding rear seat folded flat.

Subaru interiors are straightforward. Compared to previous Foresters, this is actually quite an upgrade.

The cabin's more formal control-panel layout is trimmed in satin nickel and optional leather. Subaru's designers also increased the distance between the front seats and the dash to create a greater sense of spaciousness.

The Forester's admirers likely won't be disappointed with this latest iteration's crisp styling, added performance and improved fuel efficiency.

By comparison

1 Ford Escape
Base price: $23,150

2 Hyundai Tucson
Base price: $21,800

3 Honda CR-V
Base price: $27,600

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‘Second life’ coming

Driving Force.
Discarded electric car batteries may one day power homes and commercial spaces

JIL MCINTOSH
drive@metronews.ca

GM built a “reuse unit” for power storage using the Chevrolet Volt’s lithium-ion batteries. HANDOUT

The future of lithium

Recycling lithium is currently far more expensive than mining it

- Numerous companies are working on solutions to bring down the price, so that batteries can be effectively recycled following secondary uses.
- Electric car batteries may one day be used in individual storage units, installed in houses to store power from on-site solar panels.

Electric vehicles may point the way toward the future of mobility, but they’re not without their issues. One of these is what to do with their batteries when the car is finally at the end of its life.

Several companies are working on solutions, including General Motors, which has demonstrated a “reuse unit” for power storage using the Chevrolet Volt’s lithium-ion batteries.

“This is a secondary-use application and it’s one of the ways we’re looking into extending the battery’s useful life,” says Peter Karlson, engineering specialist for General Motors of Canada.

Although the unit was demonstrated in California, it was built at GM’s research and development centre in Oshawa, Ont.

The average lifespan of any car is around 10 years, but at that point, the Volt’s battery is expected to still have about 70 per cent of its capacity intact. Rather than send the batteries for recycling with that much left in them, researchers are putting them into units that will store electricity, whether from the power grid, solar or wind power, and then make it available during power outages or expensive peak hours.

The GM prototype was demonstrated by running lights and equipment in an off-grid structure, with all of the power coming from the Volt batteries inside of it. The company says the power produced was the equivalent needed to run three to five average homes for two hours. Researchers are now working on installing the system on the electrical grid, where they will monitor “smart grid” applications where the unit can be integrated to store and supply power for homes and commercial use.

“This particular unit we’re working on is more targeted to the utility companies, allowing them to deliver power at higher quality and at lower cost to their customers,” Karlson says. “From the onset of the Volt, people have been concerned about what will happen with all of these batteries. They won’t go to landfills and we’re delaying their recycling.”

The company says it doesn’t expect electric car batteries to start being returned for at least a decade, but is working proactively to have solutions in place once they do.

Toyota Prius Plug-In comes with extra fuels savings

You’ve likely seen owners of hybrid vehicles filling up their gas tanks at the station. But now there’s a new version, the Toyota Prius Plug-In, which takes gas through its filler on one side, but which plugs into a household wall outlet on the other.

“Our initial goal with hybrids was to make them as easy to adopt as possible,” says John-Paul Farag, manager of advanced technology and powertrain at Toyota Canada.

“We didn’t want people to have to drive or maintain it differently.”

The conventional Prius hybrid uses a gasoline engine and electric motor for propulsion, running on one or the other, or a combination of both, depending on such factors as speed, acceleration, and ambient temperature.

It doesn’t need to be plugged in, because the battery recharges itself during braking or from the gasoline engine.

When the Prius Plug-In is plugged in, its battery recharges so it can provide up to about 25 kilometres on electricity alone, at speeds up to 100 km/h. Once that stored charge is depleted, the car reverts to normal hybrid operation.

The car’s display shows how long it will take to charge the battery. HANDOUT

An “electric vehicle” button on the console allows the driver to determine when the car will run on the stored charge. Someone who gets on the highway right away, for example, might opt to run the car on hybrid mode, and then switch to electricity once she’s off the highway and driving at lower speeds.

“It takes three hours to recharge on a regular household outlet,” Farag says. “On average off-peak hours, it would be about a penny a kilometre for electricity, which is about one-tenth the cost on gasoline.”

JILL MCINTOSH/FOR METRO

Is it worth it?

- The Prius Plug-In does cost more than a regular Prius, and drivers will have to examine their driving habits to see if it’s worth it to them.

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The electric car of Cadillacs

Toronto Auto Show. ELR to join Volt and Karma in Extended Range Electric Vehicle territory

AUTO PILOT
Mike Goetz
drive@metronews.ca

The 2014 Cadillac ELR is focusing on making the driver look good. HANDOUT

The 2014 Cadillac ELR is one of the cooler-looking brand-new production cars taking the stage at this week's auto show in Toronto.

It also makes GM a pioneer of sorts. Not like the folks on Little House on the Prairie, looking for really nice farming dirt. More like Thomas Edison, looking for new things that can be powered by electricity.

The Cadillac ELR is slated to start production late this year for an early 2014 on-sale date. That's when we'll find out if luxury buyers, already willing to pay a premium for a luxury ride and all it entails, are also willing to pay a bit extra for an electric powertrain.

Technically the ELR is not a pure electric vehicle. Like the Chevrolet Volt, it has an electric motor and an internal combustion engine, the latter used primarily for re-charging the ELR's battery so the vehicle is always "electrically" driven. You can also recharge it by plugging it in. Officially, GM calls it an Extended Range Electric Vehicle.

The only other extended range electric vehicles currently on the market would be the $42,000 Chevrolet Volt and the $100,000-plus Fisker Karma. A little too conveniently, all GM would say about ELR's projected price is that it would be more than Volt, less than Karma.

Cadillac is figuring, like Fisker and some others, that electricity is high-tech and desirable. But the styling of the ELR screams non-electric. You could very easily imagine it to be powered by something like a high-output V6.

The ELR is longer than the Cadillac ATS, but only offers the part-time rear seating area of a 2+2. The focus is clearly on the driver and making him or her feel good and look good.

While it has the same 1.4-litre "four" as Volt, and the same battery and electric motor set-up, it has slightly more power, due to new "battery discharge" software programming learned from Volt's first years on the road.

Handling should be several degrees better than Volt, due to a more advanced chassis, featuring 20-inch tires, a wide track, many aluminum pieces and a Watts Z-link rear suspension.

Among the many new and novel bits to ELR is Regen on Demand. When you need to slow down or come to a stop, you could use your brake pedal as usual, or you could engage Regen on Demand via paddle levers on the steering wheel. The experience is not unlike downshifting early on a manual transmission car. It's basic regenerative braking, as happens in all hybrid and EVs, but in Regen on Demand mode it does it with a lot more feeling, and a lot more electricity going back into the battery. Also neat is the system that allows drivers to select four driving modes: Sport — let's boogie; Tour — default setting; Mountain — gas engine actually provides some assistance to the electric motor; Hold — keeps your battery charge for when it might be more useful and efficient, like when you get to stop-and-go city traffic after a long commute.

It will be fun over the next few years, watching electric powertrains migrate to luxury segments, with more opportunity for styling and engineering advancements and experimentation. Let the pioneering games begin.

Details

Bullet Pointing the ELR:

- **EV range.** 56 km
- **EV plus gas range.** 480 km
- **Torque.** 298 lb-ft
- **Top speed.** 160 km/h
- **Looks.** Killer

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See today's answers at metronews.ca/answers.

Horoscopes

Aries
March 21 - April 20
There is tension in the air. Anything can happen at any moment. Go where your heart leads you today and don't worry about the consequences. It's OK to take a few risks. In fact, it's good for you.

Taurus
April 21 - May 21
What happens today will take you by surprise, most likely because you have been fearing the worst. Could it be you were too negative in your evaluation of the situation? Of course. But now you know better.

Gemini
May 22 - June 21
Make sure you keep an eye on what partners and loved ones and work colleagues are up to today. Above all, don't let them sign you up for anything you are not 100 per cent convinced is good for you.

Cancer
June 22 - July 23
Each sign is born with its own special talent and yours is your ability to sense what other people are feeling. Use that talent today to find out why someone you love feels under the weather then cheer them up.

Leo
July 24 - Aug. 23
You can do no wrong at the moment, but that does not mean you have permission to do what you know is very wrong indeed! Yes, you can push the envelope, a little, but don't push your luck too far.

Virgo
Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
Lay down the law and make sure everyone you have dealings with knows what is expected of them. Things have been a bit sloppy of late, so get your act together and make sure those around you do likewise.

Libra
Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
There may be some major upheavals today but the Sun in Aquarius has you covered, so you don't have to worry too much. Other people may be a bit negative though, so watch out for harmful emotions.

Scorpio
Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
If there is a social or career opportunity you would like to take advantage of then go for it — now, this very moment. The longer you sit there thinking about it, the more likely it is you'll miss out.

Sagittarius
Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
You can go anywhere. You can do anything. You are the master of your own destiny in every conceivable way. You find that hard to believe? Well, start believing it because it's absolutely true. Never doubt yourself.

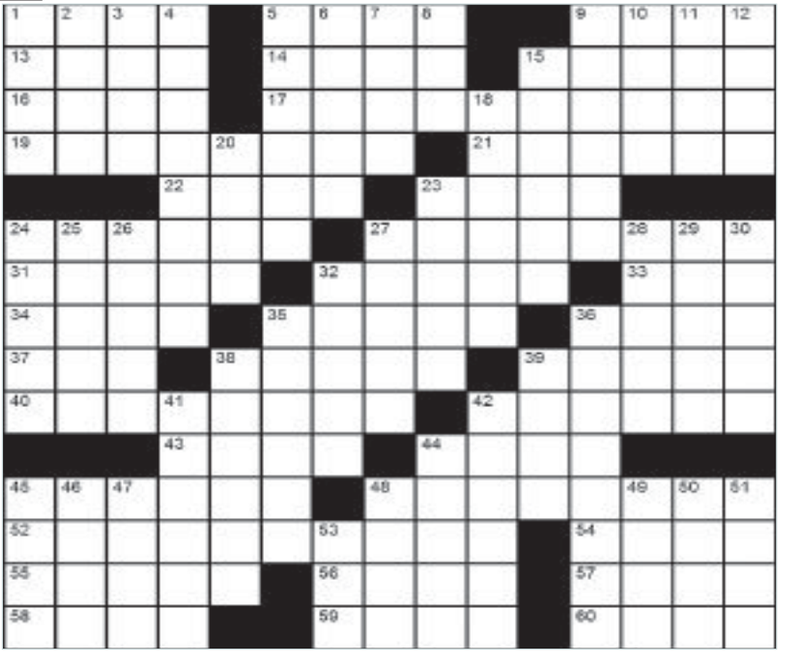
Capricorn
Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
You need to go on the offensive today. You need to make sure your rivals understand that you will not just stand there and take what they choose to give you. You're the one with the talent, so you do the choosing.

Aquarius
Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
You know instinctively when other people are lying to you, and that ability will come in handy over the next 24 hours. You don't have to let them know you are on to them though, at least not yet.

Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20
Someone in authority seems to be asking a lot of you at the moment but there is a good reason for it, and an even better reason why you should play along. Maybe they are testing you for future promotion! SALLY BROMPTON

Crossword: Canada Across and Down

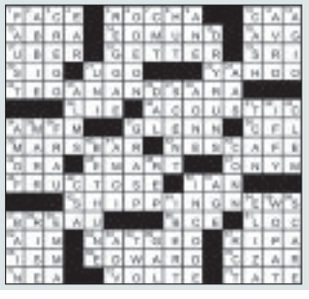
BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN



Across
1. __ wash jeans
5. Slang for coffee
9. Comprehend
13. Memo
14. Adam and Eve's grandson
15. Spring flower
16. "_ __ Rock and Roll Music" by Peter, Paul and Mary
17. Canadian activist whose achievements include the Man In Motion World Tour: 2 wds.
19. Our national summer sport
21. Canadian filmmaker Atom
22. Pulitzer-winning writer James
23. Highbrow
24. Toronto concert venue, __ Hall
27. Canadian rap star, __ Offishall
31. Surface
32. "etalk" anchor Ms. Kim
33. Ginger __
34. Cooper car
35. Makes text thicker-looking
36. Take part
37. Ms. Ryan
38. Austin's state
39. Was angry
40. Margaret Atwood bestseller, The Blind __
42. "Beyond the Sea" singer Bobby, and others
43. Shabby __ (Interior design style)
44. Greek cheese
45. Tranquil
48. "__ Development"
52. Yes or No voting event in Quebec in 1980 and 1995
54. Positive
55. Apprehensive feeling
56. Crossword rendering of a bear's scratch-on-a-tree
57. Nile wader
58. __ Scale
59. Musical based on the work of T.S. Eliot
60. Wine holder

Down
1. Indigo dye source
2. Finale, in music
3. Suffix to 'Arthr'
4. Teen drama TV series
5. Football player's numbered top
6. Fennel-like flavour
7. Viva __ (Word-of-mouth)
8. Inquire
9. Obi-Wan __
10. Meddlesome [var. sp.]
11. Vitamins brand, __ _ Day
12. Las Vegas resorts mogul, Steve __
15. Tiered temple
18. Mr. Fonda's
20. S-shaped moulding
23. Alberta's Oil __
24. ABBA musical, __ Mia!
25. Ram's sign
26. Performs a tune
27. "Canadian Idol" Season 2 winner Mr. Porter
28. Ms. Campbell
29. 1979 Sigourney Weaver sci-fi movie
30. Loans
32. Britney Spears hit
35. Next to
36. "__ Park" (1993)
38. Vacation souvenir to wear
39. Destiny
41. Showbiz news show, "__ Hollywood"
42. Skin layer
44. Kiwi __
45. Stroller, in Britain
46. Letterman's rival
47. Kabul, __.
48. 1998 Sarah McLachlan hit
49. Marching band instrument
50. Greek goddess of discord
51. Office table
53. Ms. Kidman, to pals

Yesterday's Crossword



Sudoku

How to play
Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved.

6		9				5		
	1	3		4	9	2		
	7		2		5		1	
1	9		3				6	
			9	7	6			
	8				4		2	9
	6		4		7		5	
		5	8	1		6	9	
		8				1		2

Yesterday's Sudoku

9	8	1	6	4	7	3	5	2
4	2	3	8	1	5	6	7	9
6	7	5	9	2	3	1	8	4
8	3	6	2	5	4	9	1	7
1	5	9	3	7	8	4	2	6
2	4	7	1	9	6	8	3	5
5	6	8	4	3	2	7	9	1
3	9	2	7	6	1	5	4	8
7	1	4	5	8	9	2	6	3

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E $399† 0.25 CT. T.W. in white or yellow gold.

F SAVE $50 Now $149† Diamond accent in white, yellow or pink gold. Orig. $199

G $149 0.16 CT. T.W. in sterling silver.♥

H $99 0.11 CT. T.W. in sterling silver.

J $249 Lab-created white sapphire locket in sterling silver. Orig. $279

K NOW $169† Amethyst and lab-created white sapphire. Also available in other gemstones. Orig. $199♥

L $149 Lab-created ruby and lab-created white sapphire in sterling silver.

M SAVE $200 Now $699† 0.63 CT. T.W. Orig. $899♥

N SAVE $100 Now $499 1.00 CT. T.W. in sterling silver. Orig. $599♥

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